

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1. (Currently Amended) A metal plating method comprising:
preparing ~~an acidic~~ pretreatment agent ~~by reacting or mixing in advance~~ consisting essentially of a palladium compound reacted or mixed with a silane-coupling agent obtained by reacting an imidazole-based compound and an epoxysilane-based compound;
treating the surface of an object to be plated with said pretreatment agent; and
then electroless plating said plating object.

2. (Original) The metal plating method according to claim 1, wherein said object is a semiconductor wafer.

3. (Original) The metal plating method according to claim 1, wherein said electroless plating is a copper or nickel electroless plating.

4. (Original) The metal plating method according to claim 3, wherein a conductive layer is formed by said copper or nickel electroless plating, and a copper is electroplated on said conductive layer.

5. (Currently Amended) A metal plating pretreatment agent ~~comprising~~ consisting essentially of a solution obtained by reacting or mixing in advance a palladium compound with a silane-coupling agent obtained by reacting an imidazole-based compound and an epoxysilane-based compound.

6. (Original) A semiconductor wafer, whereon a metal plating layer been formed with the metal plating method according to claim 1.

7. (Original) A semiconductor device using the semiconductor wafer according to claim 6.

8. (New) The metal plating method of Claim 1, wherein the pretreatment agent consists of the palladium compound reacted or mixed with the silane-coupling agent.

9. (New) The metal plating pretreatment agent of Claim 5, consisting of the palladium compound reacted or mixed with the silane-coupling agent.

10. (New) The metal plating method of Claim 1, wherein the palladium compound is palladium chloride, the imidazole-based compound is imidazole and the epoxysilane-based compound is γ -glycidoxypropyltrimethoxysilane.

11. (New) The metal plating pretreatment agent of Claim 5, wherein the palladium compound is palladium chloride, the imidazole-based compound is imidazole and the epoxysilane-based compound is γ -glycidoxypropyltrimethoxysilane.